

## MAETERLINCK'S MONNA VANNA

## THE BELGIAN'S STRIKING DRAMA HEARD IN GERMAN.

Irving Place Theatre Crowded—The Performance Honest, Not Brilliant—Manager Conried Says Something About His Right to Give the Play.

"In my twenty-five years as a theatrical manager I have never produced a play without having the legal right to do so," said Manager Conried last night in the lobby of his Irving Place Theatre.

This remark was called forth by a question put by THE SUN's theatrical reporter on the all-absorbing topic of Maeterlinck's "Monna Vanna," which was given for the first time in German in this city. Manager Fiske has the English rights. Manager Conried has the German rights from the translator. That is the arrangement.

The pother is really a misunderstanding, for the play has never been protected by copyright. Last summer a representative of THE SUN received a letter from Alfred Suess, Maeterlinck's English translator, informing him of the absence of proper copyright.

Any one can give "Monna Vanna." As a matter of fact, it has been played at the Thalia Theatre on the Bowery in the Hebrew tongue, and out in Milwaukee at the German Theatre. There was no attempt on the part of Manager Fiske to stop last night's production. "Monna Vanna" is far from being a second "Parsifal" in the legal sense.

As might have been expected the performance on this occasion was honest and far from illuminating. The subtlety, the gorgeous prose, the delicate ethical point, in a word, the heroic splendor of Maeterlinck's string drama were all lost. For brilliancy was substituted a pious earnestness, for poetry a commonplace miscellany, but even a mediocre interpretation could not quite dim the beauties of the play, though it did throw into unpleasant relief its prolonged conversational passages.

Several episodes of power and meaning went for naught—notably the entire scene between Prinsess and the Machiavellian Florentine emissary Trivulzio. The English sole is written the contrast of the spy's mean soul and the barbaric grandeur of Prinsess is a big factor in this act. II. The wounding of the latter serves its purpose in the next act.

It is hardly necessary to tell readers of THE SUN the story of this new *Walden*, this combination of the old and the new, which went forth from beleaguered Pisa to the tent of the invading and victorious general there to lay down honor as a wife, as a woman, her life in the hands of the conqueror. The role is a trying one; it demands an actress of heroic, artistic stature.

Berta Roscoe is not played or temperamentally suited to the part. She is intelligent, well trained, but her methods are too colloquial, too colorless for romantic drama. She does not make the least use of the dramatic resources which the play serves up on this account. That she was a second George Jessel, or a second Stella Hohenfels no one believed.

Alexander Rottmann was a stalwart and unmodulated Prinsess. His tent was made of cardboard and other temporary forces, though he hardly suggested the supple man of culture who was in the nature of the character. His love making was robust rather than tender. He did not dispense with his faultless curls and play with his own hair, which is blonde and curly as is required.

Francis Kierstead was the loquacious Marco—a very *Polonius* in his craft and garrulity—was the most satisfactory figure in the cast. His first act was effective. Julius Koller was the first of the play, splendid enough, even to the point of losing dignity.

It is a pity Herr Conried is so occupied with preparations for "Parsifal." Guido is a role that would suit him well. Julius Haller missed most of the points as Prinsess, and the audience, for the first time, saw much too dark. We could not see the faces of the actors, and gesture and expression count for much in this play.

The production was not auspicious; it was the best that could be made by the management. But there was no reason why the management should wobble in the Pisan breeze. One leaning tower is enough for any Italian town, no matter its ambition for architecture out of plumb.

There was much applause from a big audience and "Monna Vanna" assuredly scored a success, which, under adverse circumstances, speak much for its vitality. Whatever else the Conried company can do—and it does many things well—tragedy is not its forte.

Parsifal Burgstaller sat in a stage box and doubtless wondered why Wagner had not given him such a chance at loveliness as Prinsess. He is the "contingent" who will be given for some time to come.

## FIVE WOMEN USHERS QUIT.

Majestic's Manager Says Masters Secured 'Em—Only Three Left.

Only three of the women ushers at the Majestic Theatre showed up for work last night. The manager gravely asked that the five who failed to appear had been scared away by masochists.

"They sent me word in the afternoon that they were through," said the manager. "As we had only three women ushers we had to renege the men we had discharged. The three women who still remain say they will stick, but unless we can get others to take the places of those who refused to come I will have to let the three faithful ones go."

Miriam Foster, the head usher, who wears diamonds, is among the faithful, but the press agent of the theatre was very last night to let the three faithful ones go. The male employees had been called off because they were satisfied that women ushers wouldn't do.

## WARFIELD SAYS HE'LL QUIT

If a Receiver is Appointed for His Show—One Threatened in Now With Belasco.

More of the troubles between David Belasco and his alleged fellow theatrical managers were told before Justice Leventritt in the Supreme Court yesterday at a hearing on the application of Joseph Brooks for a dissolution of the partnership between himself and Belasco in the tour of Dave Warfield in "The Auctioneer."

Through counsel, Belasco argued that Brooks is merely a dummy of Klaw & Erlanger, but forward because the theatrical syndicate could not afford to have it known that it had dealings with him, and no troupe had arisen until Belasco had succeeded in independent theatrical management. Counsel for Brooks called for a receiver.

Belasco's counsel said that Warfield had given notice of his intention to abandon the show if a receiver were appointed. Justice Leventritt reserved decision.

## May Build a New Academy of Music.

A meeting of the directors of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, which was held on Nov. 30, will be held on Monday next to consider a proposition for the construction of a new Academy, either on the old site or in the immediate neighborhood. All the leading directors and most of the stockholders are believed to favor the movement.

## Vaudeville Combine to Last Till 1910.

The Vaudeville Managers' Association of the Eastern Circuit, of which nearly all the vaudeville managers east of Chicago are members, held their semi-annual meeting last night at their headquarters in the St. James Building and voted to continue the association until 1910. The officers here will be retained.

## COULDN'T READ HIS POTHOOKS.

Court Stenographer a Bad Witness in a Perjury Trial.

Valentine S. Lillie, stenographer of the Third District Municipal Court, was the chief witness yesterday in the General Sessions in a trial for perjury in which Otto L. Spannbake of 234 West Fifty-seventh street, an architect, is the complainant against Herman Bauman, a builder. Bauman is accused of perjury on June 18 last, in a civil suit before Judge Moore in the Third District Municipal Court.

Mr. Lillie, at about the time of the alleged perjury, when his memory was fresh, made a transcript of his notes and upon the transcript the perjury charge is based.

He tried to read from his notes yesterday and got tangled.

"It's hard to read stenographic notes," said he.

"Is it?" interjected Judge Cowing. "I didn't know that. In these courts we have trials every day of murders, larcenies and all kinds of crime and our stenographer don't seem to have any difficulty in transcribing their notes."

Mr. Lillie took a fresh grip of his note book and studied it intently. Finally he began to read.

"Wait," said Assistant District Attorney Train. "There isn't any 'and' also in your copy of your transcript. Are those words in your notes?"

"No," said Lillie.

"Why did you say they were, then?"

"Well, I just happened to say," said Lillie.

"But you're under oath," said Mr. Train.

"Why don't you read just what your notes say?"

"It was a mistake," smiled Lillie.

"See here, Mr. Lillie," said Judge Cowing, "you seem to be pretty badly tangled up. Now, I'll tell you what to do. You take that note book home to-night and study it carefully. Then you transcribe what you think it says, putting in every period and semicolon and comma and exclamation point and question mark and any other kind of punctuation you find, and then you bring that copy here and we'll see what we can make of it."

"You made last June," said Lillie.

"It was a mistake," said Lillie.

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## THE MUSIC OF YESTERDAY.

SECOND OF THE MUSICAL ART SOCIETY'S CONCERTS.

A Thoroughly Enjoyable Programme, Including a Fine Psalm by Bortiniansky and a Handel Concerto Grosso—Miss Jeanne Clerihew Song Season.

The second concert of the eleventh season of the Musical Art Society called together in Carnegie Hall last night such an audience as only these entertainments can draw. Is it a "fad" to worship at the shrine of the fathers of modern music? Is it a fashion to sit at the feet of Palestrina and Lasso and the makers of the purest devotional strains ever sung out of the heavenly choir? If it be a "fad" or a fashion, it is gifted with extraordinary length of days, for this is the eleventh season of the Musical Art Society, and the end is not yet.

The world was its head wisely and acclaims the masters of the Netherlands school, whose music a decade ago was to them as the fabled monsters of the East to the travellers of Marco Polo's time. Now Palestrina and Sweelinck and Eccard and Hobericht shake hands with Tchaikovsky and Brahms and Lassen at these concerts and the inner brotherhood is hard put to it to tell why the ancient and simple diatonic harmonies, fragrant with the mediæval quaintness of the ecclesiastical modes, stand so firmly on their pedestals of glory in the presence of the moderns with their diabolical of chromatics and more unresolved discords than the fifteenth century dreamed of in its philosophy.

Last night's concert was a delight for many reasons, and not the least of them was the demonstration of the fact that the treasury of old time music is still plethoric. The first part of the programme contained an "Ave Maria" by Palestrina, two old Christmas songs, "Weihnachtsgesang" and "Weihnachtslied," a "Gaudete Omnes" by Sweelinck, two more old German Christmas songs, namely, Eccard's "Freude unschuldig" and the always welcome "Still Nacht," and Bortiniansky's setting of the "Thirtieth Psalm."

Then came the customary instrumental interlude in the shape of an unfamiliar double concerto by Handel, composed in the delectable key of F major for two wind choirs and an accompaniment of strings. The orchestra played with the bow. Following this were the modern works, ushered in by an archaic number—a ballet for five from Tomkins, one of the fathers of English composition.

The real moderns were Lassen, represented by four part songs, Brahms by his "Mörs Herzschenken" and "Hörst du mich," and Schumann by his "Schön Rothraut," "Sommerlied" and "Talsmann." These moderns are well known in their way and their way is well known. But they are every-day companions. We hear the morning stars sing together less often and their glory is in its own kind.

The Palestrina "Ave Maria," sung last night, is an old friend; and its wonderful counterpart, its apparently spontaneous and unmediated intervention in the programme, was a web of marvelous vocal beauty, came with the freshness of a new thought. Such music never grows old, and the great artists of the past, who wrote the Psalms, the choir sang it with lovely balance of tone and with excellent intonation.

There are two Christmas songs which stood first on the programme, one from the famous "Lochmeier Liederbuch" and the other from the "Liederhandschrift," and the former every hearer by their exquisite melody and their churchly harmonies. Sweelinck's number was an admirable example of his style and his fine sense of melody to be most inspiring. Eccard's famous hymn achieved its due effect, and of course, "Still Nacht" had to be played.

Bortiniansky's psalm was new to the hearers, and it made a deep impression. Its composer was the father of Russian music, and his style is clearly the Italian influence, but also something of the native feeling of the Russian. The psalm is a masterpiece of his style and his fine sense of melody to be most inspiring. Eccard's famous hymn achieved its due effect, and of course, "Still Nacht" had to be played.

The only change to the identity of the dead burglar found was the name "William P. Smith, New York," written in his hat.

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## CHURCH OF MANY PARTS.

Hits of Academy of Design, Cathedral and Stewart Mansion in It—Open Sunday.

The new church of Our Lady of Lourdes in West 142d street, built of parts of St. Patrick's Cathedral, the Academy of Design Building and the residence of the late A. T. Stewart, is to be dedicated on Sunday morning by Archbishop Farley. Following the service of dedication, pontifical high mass will be celebrated by Bishop John J. O'Connell. In the evening the Jesuit preacher, the Rev. T. J. McCuskey of Boston, will preach.

The material of the old Academy of Design, as it stood at Twenty-third street and Fourth avenue for many years, has been used in the front and east façades of the church, with the architectural style somewhat changed. The heavy cornice is preserved. Instead of two stairways to the porch entrance, as the building stood downtown, there will be only one. The rear wall of the church was long ago the rear wall of St. Patrick's Cathedral. It was taken away to be replaced by the new Lady Chapel. The appearance of the church is somewhat surprising at first sight, but as much of the pure Venetian Gothic of the Academy is preserved in the composite structure, it is not wholly without beauty. The church seats 750 persons. There is a large Sunday school room in the basement.

They go to Anti-Polygamist Meetings, She Declares, Get a Front Seat and Keep Their Eyes on the Women Speakers From the Beginning to the Close.

Mrs. Darwin R. James of Brooklyn, president of the Interdenominational Council of Women, has long been one of the most prominent leaders in the fight against Mormonism and is at present active in the anti-smooth crusade. Mrs. James was reported yesterday in an evening paper as declaring that the Mormon elders were resorting to "hypnotism," not only in spreading their doctrines among young women and girls, but to influence the women who go out as anti-polygamist lecturers. When seen last night at her home, 228 Gates avenue, Mrs. James said:

"It is quite true that representatives of the Mormon Church are in the habit of attending the meetings held to denounce its principles and practices, but I did not charge them with trying to exert any hypnotic influence over our lecturers. Hypnotism assumes two parties, and the Mormons know that it would be useless to try it upon our representatives.

"They go to our meetings, however, and get in the front seats, keeping their eyes fixed on the speakers from the beginning to the close. Their object is to cause annoyance to the speakers, and, if possible, to convert them. This habit on the part of the Mormons of attending the anti-polygamist meetings is common all over the country. Of a hundred odd meetings held last year in Pennsylvania there were only four at which two or more of these elders were present. As a general rule, the Mormons attending these gatherings are young and good looking.

"Out in Wisconsin, two of these elders followed one of our lecturers in her tour all over the State and when possible directly in front of her. When they could not get front seats they took pains to let her know before she began her address in that part of the room they were, so that she might know that they were watching her. One evening after she had spoken for the third time, they told her to stop, and dared her to repeat her remarks. This young woman was so disturbed over the matter that she wrote me full particulars about it and described the elders so that if anything happened to her I might be able to trace them.

"Mrs. James says that at all the anti-Mormon meetings in the East representatives of the polygamists are present in conspicuous places, but that they are careful not to make any disturbance.

\$330,000 IN PUBLIC BEQUESTS.

George W. Boyd of Boston Left Most of His Estate to Charity.

BOSTON, Dec. 17.—The will of the late George W. Boyd, under which he bequeathed nearly \$350,000 are made to charitable institutions in Boston, New York and Portland, Me., principally in this city, was probated in the Suffolk Probate Court today. Mr. Boyd died recently, leaving no relative closer than an equally aged aunt, for whom provision was made among the private bequests. These amounted to \$65,000, given outright, and to \$50,000 more in trust, to revert at the death of the beneficiaries to certain charitable institutions.

The testator made his fortune in the South before the war, and a large part of the private bequests are to the children of Capt. William Boyd, master of the ship "The Vessel" which he owned, and of which he was the master. The will of Mr. Boyd, at the age of 17, from Bristol, R. I., to Mobile.

BROOKLYN CHRISTMAS TREE.

Little Society Preparing to Make Many Little Ones Happy.

The Brooklyn Christmas Tree, a society organized by Mrs. Frank Sittig, which has been supplying Christmas gifts to the destitute children of Brooklyn for the past twelve years, is to give a benefit in the Amphitheatre, Brooklyn, on Saturday afternoon and evening.

The use of the theatre has been donated by David B. Boland, and the entire proceeds will be devoted to the purchase of gifts for the Christmas distribution, which will be held in the Twenty-third Regiment Armory on Christmas morning. It is expected that 5,000 children will attend.

Gifts of dolls, toys, clothing, etc., are expected to the society will be received at the Winter Warehouse, 41-43 Flatbush avenue, Brooklyn.

AMUSEMENTS.

METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE.

Grand Opera Season 1904-1905.

TO-NIGHT AT 8—LOHENGGRIN. Gade, Walker, Gade, Walker, Gade, Walker.

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## MORMONS STARE AT SPEAKERS

MRS. JAMES SAYS THEY THUS DISCONCERT THEM.

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